

SOCIAL  
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HARRY F. WARD

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# SOCIAL EVANGELISM

BY  
HARRY F. WARD



NEW YORK  
Missionary Education Movement of the  
United States and Canada

1915

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## I

### WHAT IS SOCIAL EVANGELISM?

THE social movement of our time is deeply influencing the life of the Church. Every department of religious activity gives evidence of being touched by it. It is in the field of evangelism that its trail is faintest. Here its main work is yet to be done.

The activities and propaganda which have recently been organized in the churches under the head of "Social Service" are often contrasted with the evangelistic function of the Church as though they were inherently antagonistic or mutually exclusive. This is largely because the terms social service and evangelism are both overworked. One has long been and the other is fast becoming a

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house of refuge for the crowd that cry "Lord, Lord, but do not the things that I say." The shibboleth is shouted but the deed remains undone, the fact unaccomplished. The crowd prefers the easy enthusiasm of the bleachers to the stern struggle of the field, would rather cheer the embarking regiment than seek the enlisting office. When the Church actually labors at the tasks of evangelism and social service, they are found to be interdependent. Social service is found to have definite evangelistic values, and evangelism to have genuine social worth. In fact, a social evangelism appears.

The social service movement is far from being the superficial propaganda described by its superficial critics. It does not propose to make the Church a mere agent for social reform. Its purpose is the regeneration of the social order, and it promotes reforms only as they are the working out of social salvation. It has never sought to substitute a "soup and

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soap salvation" for "spiritual regeneration," but it does believe that regeneration must affect the whole of life. Its chief concern is not with externalities but with getting the very dynamic of God into all human movements.

When the regenerative purpose and power of the social service movement is recognized, social service and evangelism are seen to have a relationship even closer than that of parallel agencies of the Kingdom. One is the inseparable complement of the other. The social awakening in the Church is the culmination of evangelical Christianity, which replaced a formal intellectualism that had neither spiritual power nor ethical results. It is the completion of the movement to vitalize Christianity, which could not be contained in feeling any more than in creeds. A scientific world, taught to know reality, demands of religion ethical results. This puts an additional task upon evangelism. It must secure the realization of God in the outer as well as

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the inner life, it must obtain the "witness of the Spirit" in the contacts of the Christian with his fellows. This is precisely the purpose of the social movement in the churches. This is also the test of its worth; and the future of our faith depends upon the ability to meet this test. If social Christianity cannot put more of God into human life than has been realized by the purely individualistic, emotional type, then our religion has no triumphant place in the ongoing of the race.

Evangelism—that almost threadbare term—has come to mean something more than the aggressive promulgation of the gospel. In its recent manifestations it has come to mean the aggressive attempt to secure individual adherents to organized Christianity. To confine its objective to individuals alone is a grievous limitation of the purpose and function, the power and the goal of our faith. To attempt to develop an evangelism which should seek the community life for Christianity but should

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ignore individuals would be an error of equally grave importance.

To insist upon the necessity for a social evangelism is not to contrast an evangelism that is social in its purpose with one that is individual in its objective. Indeed, such a contrast cannot properly be made, for an evangelism that is true to its gospel must be both individual and social. Says the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church: "In the social crisis now confronting Christianity the urgent need and duty of the Church is to develop an evangelism which will recognize the possibility and the imperative necessity of accomplishing the regeneration of communities as well as persons, whose goal shall be the perfection both of society and of the individual." The more thoroughly evangelism comprehends the dual nature of its task the more effective will be its work. The clearer it sees its relation to the social order, the stronger will be its appeal to the

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modern individual. The more it understands the individual and comes to comprehend his social nature, the stronger will be its grip upon the community life.

The development of the social values in evangelism and of the evangelistic values in social service is one of the signs of the times. It forecasts the consequent amalgamation in a common effort of forces that have heretofore been working separately. The mighty evangelism of the middle of the last century created as one of its by-products the moral standards of the formative community life of the Middle West. It turned licentious, drunken, brawling people into folks who began to organize their communities on the basis of purity, temperance, and a decent respect for the rights and opinions of others. The evangelism of to-day, even in the hands of its most individualistic exponents, attempts to exert a direct influence upon the community life. It brings its batteries to bear upon cor-



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rupt government, the liquor traffic, the social evil. Here is an attempt to bring within the scope of the evangel the fundamental social relationships of sex and property. The most easily recognized perversions of these relationships are vigorously attacked even though their subtler abuses pass unrecognized and their constructive control for the development of the Christian social order goes untaught. It is imperfect testimony, but still evidence of the fact that evangelism is necessarily social in its nature and results.

On the other hand, the evangelistic values in the social service movement become increasingly apparent. This must needs be, for this movement is one of the developments of the great missionary impulse of the last century. It grew out of the passion to serve the neglected lives of our city slums which was forced, for the very satisfaction of its desire to save men, to develop an equal passion to save the social order in which men must live.

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Small wonder then that the social passion kindles the fading fires of a personal faith in the lives of men in both the group of intellect and the group of toil, who have turned away from the Church because it gave scant encouragement to their great enthusiasm for humanity, to their devotion to community welfare. Said the leading educator of a community to the social service speaker: "I have cut out the church for several years, but if it is going to do vital community service, count me in." A social service meeting in another town was amazed to hear the leading socialist critic of the churches declare: "If you churchmen really mean to take up this program, I'll go with you to the end of the road."

There are sections of our cosmopolitan population who have never heard the gospel of Jesus in its original simplicity, to whom its social interpretation and application is the easiest and sometimes the only approach. The Jews offer an impervious front to conventional

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evangelism. Yet the younger Jews, particularly of the Slavic group, are true to their prophetic ancestry in their social passion. They respond eagerly to the social teachings of Jesus and there are notable instances of churches which have been wise enough to approach them with this message and have found that it developed a response to the claim of the Carpenter upon the personal life.

In every type of community—in city, town, village, and open country—the power of those churches which have united with a vigorous evangelistic effort to transform individual lives a powerful appeal to the heart of the community indicates that the evangelism of the future is one which purposes to accomplish the redemption of both the individual and the social order.

The justification for requiring evangelism to be conscious of its social goal lies in the organic nature of society. If our fathers developed an evangelism that considered indi-

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viduals alone, it was because they lived in a world which was composed of individuals and little more. Their work was adequate for their day. It calls, not for imitation of its method, but for the matching of its adequacy in a very different day. We live in a time when sociology has revealed to us a world in which the individual, considered apart from his interrelationships with others, does not exist. We have a social consciousness; we are aware of our relation to the organic world of humanity. We develop a social conscience and a social will to direct the common efforts of mankind. By these facts the whole world is changed for us, even as it was changed for the men who first became aware of the great fact that the physical universe is not a mere assemblage of atoms but an organized system, moving by definite laws. The fact that society is an organism must be reckoned with by religious statesmanship.

The extent to which the organic conception

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of society is valid is of course a question. The position of modern sociology may be fairly summarized as follows: The individual is not a dependent creature, completely subordinate to the group, as in many primitive communities. The individual is not independent of the group, creating the community by his contacts with other individuals, as in the theory of the eighteenth century philosophers. The individual and the community are interdependent. He is the cell in the social organism, and here, as in all forms of organic life, the cell and the organism live by and for each other. The individual is a member of a number of organic social groups,—the family, the Church, the state, industry. These in their turn make up the wider social order, the organic world of which he is a part in and through these smaller organisms, even as the cell is a part of the bodily organism through its members or organs.

Let it be freely admitted that the organic

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concept of society is not entirely adequate, for life is always greater than our definitions and explanations. Yet it is still the most appropriate and complete conception that can be used, for modern biology includes in the term "organism" the spiritual aspects of life and does not limit it to merely physical phenomena.

The organic conception of society holds that the social order is not simply a number of individual lives with their different interests amalgamated. It declares that society has developed as a group life, in which the individual has developed as an organic part.

It points out that the primary impulses of the individual—the impulse to provide food and shelter, the impulse to propagate his kind—are social impulses. They cannot be properly satisfied without the cooperation of others. This fact requires their control for the common good, and herein are the beginnings of the community life. First comes the

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family, then the tribe or clan, then the state or nation. Finally a world-wide collective life appears. This collective life develops its own organs and functions, becomes capable of determining and realizing its own collective end in government, religion, and industry, and moves toward the brotherhood of man.

In all of this collective development the individual shares. It depends upon him, but it goes beyond him. The life of any social group, for instance a church, is more than the life of the individuals who compose it. They live for it and sometimes they die for it, making its larger life, by which they are in turn strengthened and developed. In the wider social order this is increasingly true. The social will is very much more than the aggregate of the individual wills. The social conscience is different from the mere addition of the individual consciences. The social mind is something more than the sum of the individual intelligences. If any one wants to determine

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this difference, let him follow the deliberations and decisions of any group of educated men, for instance a college faculty. Let him observe the compromise of individual consciences in group judgments, for example the verdicts of an ecclesiastical court. Let him see "good citizens" carried away by a mob into a frenzy of barbarism. Let him watch the will of a nation set for war sweep individuals before it. Decisions are made to which the individual mind or conscience acting apart would never consent; acts are done which the individual will moving alone would never initiate. In this sphere of the different results between the group action and the sum of the separate actions of individuals, we trace the action of the collective mind, conscience, and will—something which does not exist apart from the individuals which compose it, but which is yet more than they. *It is this something more, this formation and product of the manifold interrelationships of individuals,*



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*which is neglected in the evangelism that deals only with individuals.* This becomes a fatal oversight if the purpose is to establish Christianity in the organic life of men, to develop a kingdom of God on earth. Hence the necessity for insisting upon an evangelism that shall be directed at the group life of men as well as at individuals, that shall make the social mind alight with the truth of God, the social conscience quickened with the righteousness of God, and the social will in harmony with the eternal purpose of God. Such an evangelism will have authority in modern life, will gain a wider vision and a deeper intensity, will reach to the very heart of the world.

As a matter of fact Christianity has always expressed itself in group terms, has always vitally affected the organic life of man. It grew out of a faith which tried to organize religion in community life and which expressed the intimate relations of the soul with God in group terms. It came naturally

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to speak of the Divine as Father, the race as children, the Redeemer as Son of man. Its great moments of spiritual potency have always been followed by significant group movements. The ever-living Christ has always come where the group is,—“two or three,” the family, the Church, the nation, the race. Early Christianity attempted to organize a fraternal community, the Reformation gave birth to modern democracy, the Evangelical Revival developed the desire for race solidarity and began those practical movements which will make it possible.

\ All the great evangelists—men as diverse as Savonarola and Moody—appealed to the social conscience of their times, were social forces. The prophets did something more than rebuke kings: they appealed to the heart of the nation; preached social justice. Jesus came to Golgotha, not because his teachings disturbed the complacent orthodoxy of the rabbis, but because his great gospel of the

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Kingdom was in dynamic opposition to the utterly selfish lives of the chief priests and scribes, "the rulers of the people." The apostles found themselves in prison, not because they taught a new doctrine, but because they ran counter to the social current of their time—"turned the world upside down."

These all were social evangelists. With deadly precision they hit the individual with their message, but with the same effectiveness they struck home to the social conscience. The fallacy that an individualistic gospel would somehow work out for the social good never deceived them. They had not studied social psychology, but they knew that religion can move men individually without moving them in the mass, if it does not appeal to them in their group relations. As a matter of fact the inadequacy of a purely individual evangelism is painfully apparent. It has not saved our cities nor our corporations. It has presented us with the fact that many of the

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men at the head of the unsocial forms of business are members in good standing in evangelical churches. It has shown us that you may save souls according to its standards, without saving men. Its very incompleteness proclaims aloud the fact that an effective evangelism must make its definite appeal to men in their social relations. The gospel of the Kingdom insists that a man can have no relation with God apart from his relations to his neighbor, that religion is life and is emphatically a family affair, which means that without losing any of its individual definiteness and effectiveness, evangelism must have a conscious social aim and purpose.

The contacts of Christianity with the group life of men have been mostly unconscious. They have been the indirect result of its inherent social nature and purpose. They have been its contributions to the slow process of social evolution. The time has now come to accelerate this process, to arouse to consciousness

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and to organize for action the forces that are able to control the progress of the nation and ultimately of the race. This requires a direct evangelistic appeal. Just as the pioneer ministers awakened the forces that molded the growing community life in the Middle West, so must our modern evangelists still more consciously arouse and organize the forces that are to mold the world of tomorrow. Social evangelism, which has been the partially perceived fact of the past, must be the fully recognized fact of the present.

This necessity is recognized in the changed conception of the relation of the church to the community. It is coming to be accepted that the church exists, not to build up itself, but to build up the community, that the good pastor is not the one who merely develops a good church but the one who makes a community good. The strong churches are those which regard themselves as missionary outposts of the kingdom of God in an environ-

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ment not yet Christianized, which are facing the duty of evangelizing the community life, which have organized their membership to become a community force, which are living not for themselves, but are willing if need be to die for the saving of their community. The weak, dying churches are those which are struggling to hold on to their own feeble life, to retain the remnants of their original membership in a changing population. Ministering only to individuals and not to the community life, they slowly pass to their dishonored death.) The object of church endeavor then is to make the community religious.

What then is a religious community? It is not a community that is full of churches, each seeking its own sectarian development, each cultivating its own peculiar formulas and practise. It is rather a community which has become aware of its organic nature, which has found its soul, repented of its sins, come to conscious realization of its powers and needs,

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and is coordinating its forces, including its churches, in harmony with a power greater than itself, for the working out of its salvation. This process is actually being accomplished in many a community, sometimes by a single church, sometimes by the federated churches. It must everywhere continue until the Church has poured the life of God into every function of the community, until that city appears in which God dwells with men and they are his people, and in it there will be no temple, "for the Lord God the Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple thereof."

The same process which has been going on both indirectly and directly, unconsciously and consciously, in the local community has also been proceeding in the social order as a whole. At times Christianity has directed its forces with conscious intent and purpose to the Christianizing of the social order in some particular, and always it has made indirectly for that end. The two fundamental relation-

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ships of society—sex and property—expressing the instincts at the base of the social structure, the one making for the perpetuation and the other for the maintenance of the race, have never been considered wholly outside the scope of the evangel. Jesus touched them with a direct message, and always the churches have had some teachings concerning them. Three social groupings organized around these fundamental social instincts are worldwide. Everywhere men participate in the family, the state, and industry. These make up the social order as a whole. Christianity first moved upon the fundamental social group, the family. It taught that the expression of the life of God in the family group involved purity, the protection and development of childhood, the elevation of womanhood to equality with manhood. The Church has always proclaimed a more or less definite social evangel in relation to the family. The result is the Christian family group, the fin-



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est, freest, most ennobling form of social relationship known to man.

In the state the effect of the Christian evangel has long been manifest. Its conception of brotherhood and service as the only valid form of social relationship is producing a type of government for the common good and not for the special privilege of a few. Wherever the gospel is proclaimed, despotism is destroyed, autocracy is replaced by democracy. While the Christian state is yet to be, its foundations are among us. This again means that Christianity has accomplished an evangelistic impact upon the social order.

In the great work process of life—the fundamental struggle for food, shelter, and clothing—the evangel is just beginning to be heard. It is carrying over into the competitive struggle of the industrial process the same principle of service and cooperation that has modified the strife of classes in the state and welded them into a government that is

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the mutual promotion of the common welfare. Already industry is being humanized and personalized. Its corporate life is being touched by the power of the gospel directed immediately to it, is feeling after the methods that will enable men to obey the law of neighbor love in the work process and, instead of working against each other for self-advantage, to work together for the common good.

It now remains to carry these efforts and tendencies to their conclusion, to direct the forces of evangelism toward every part of the social order that remains unregenerate, to accomplish absolutely the Christian family, the Christian state, the Christian industry, and through these the Christian social order. *To put the dynamic of God's life into all the activities of man, to bring the social passion to a consciousness of its spiritual nature, to tie the social program to the eternities and fill it with the power of an endless life—this is the compelling task of the Church.*

## II

### THE IMPERATIVE FOR A SOCIAL EVANGEL

**T**HE imperative for a social evangelism is found in the mind and heart of Jesus. "Thou shalt"—a social obligation binding man to God and his neighbor—stands at the entrance to the Christian life. It is a command which cannot be evaded, and the winsome fascination of its ideal is more compelling than all the prohibitions thundered from the clouded mountaintop. Its fundamental obligation carries one, not simply into the new heaven where God is known as Father, but also into the new earth where man is to be known as brother in all the relationships of life. It was the gospel of the Kingdom that Jesus preached, and all recent inter-

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pretations of the Kingdom find its expression in the vital contacts of the workaday world. It is to be expressed in time and place even though its realities transcend them.

While the theologians were emphasizing the transcendent aspects of the kingdom of God, the statesmen of the Church were ever seeking to give it visible form. The great missionary program of Christianity is an effort to obey the imperative of the gospel and take the world for Jesus. The vision of making the kingdoms of the earth to be the Kingdom of Jesus has always inspired his followers. With splendid vision the Church early fashioned an imperial program. It sought to dominate the earth with one type of religious life, to establish everywhere one form of religious organization. This plan of an imperial Church substituted for the purposes of Jesus the ambitions of the Roman empire. It stripped the Carpenter of his peasant garb, clad him in purple, put a sword in his hand,

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a crown on his head, and sat him on the throne of the Cæsars. History shows no greater distortion of the spirit and method of a world movement. Promoted with superb skill and sacrificial devotion, it nevertheless was foredoomed to failure. Before our eyes it now wastes away to its appointed end. Failing to subdue the world to its type, ecclesiasticism inevitably withdraws from the world. It seeks the mystic meditation of the cloister, the futile pomp of the altar, or the intellectual abstraction of the study. In either case it isolates itself from the great movements of democratic thought and action that are forming the modern world.

The missionary program of the Protestant Churches is of another sort. It has not sought to subdue the peoples of the earth to the scepter of an imperial Christ whose delegated authority it claimed, but it has proclaimed to brother men of all races the power of a universal Savior to be worked out in their lives as

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he and they might will. Its purpose has been to plant the flag of the cross on the last frontier, to proclaim the gospel to every creature. The accomplishment of that task is now in sight, and already the missionary forces are forming themselves for a more difficult undertaking, as their leaders are comprehending the full vision of Jesus. With the geographic world evangelized, there still remain new fields to conquer; there is yet the organic world to be made Christian. There is yet to be evangelized the social order in all its activities and functions, developing in each nation but rapidly fusing internationally into a world life. Because the missionaries have seen the life-giving power of the gospel in the social order of the lands they have evangelized, and more, because they have gone to Calvary with their Master, missionary statesmanship comes rapidly to the full world-vision of Jesus. It knows that what he wants is not territory nor numbers

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owning his name but the life of men doing his will. It sees him now, not as captain and conqueror with sword and crown, but as suffering servant saving the race by virtue of his sacrificial love. So missions now add to their extensive campaign to preach the gospel to every creature an intensive purpose to carry the spirit of that gospel into the very heart of the world. It wastes no energy in the competition of sects, but with all its militant spirit unites all its forces in the supreme endeavor to bring life to the whole world.

This is the sublime program of Jesus. His gospel is a leaven to transform the nature of life, not a form to which life must be molded. In the face of the might of Rome, across the splendor of the Cæsars, the Galilean peasant flings his cry, proclaims a kingdom not *of* this world but *in* this world, held by love and not by might. It is the boldest word of human record. Small wonder that men hear the voice of the Eternal when this man without a

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country proclaims a world-wide empire of a content vaster than the dreams of the world conquerors, when this despised workman with no citizenship talks of transforming all the organized life of men. His religion is to be expressed, not in creed nor form, but in life; is to be extended, not by the acceptance of phrases nor repetition of rites, but by the leaven of life. Mohammed may win his millions by the sword, Rome may hold hers with iron grip by the power of fear, but the Carpenter wins men and the world by a deeper compulsion and holds them by a stronger bond. His Kingdom is to come on earth by intensive conquest—by the power of a love, mighty to save the whole of life, a transforming leaven able to reach the heart of society as well as of men, to capture its motives and its motor powers. This was the purpose of Jesus, and his followers must consciously undertake the task of realizing his vision.

An imperative to develop an evangelism as



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wide as the purpose of Jesus lies also in the self-interest of the Church. Though it may at times have followed evil counselors and sought strange gods, the Church has never wholly lost the vision of Jesus for the transformation of life. Its times of greatest power have been the times when it has poured the currents of God's life into all the associated life of men. Its days of strength have been the days when a new vision of God has driven men to new relations with their fellows: after Pentecost, a brotherly community life; with the Reformation, the stirring of the common people, the beginnings of modern democracy; out of the Evangelical Revival the humanizing of government and business. On the other hand, the days of weakness in the Church, the days of decay, have been the days of withdrawal from the vital activities of the world. Ancient monasticism and modern pietism have both proved fatal.

Like every other organism, if it is to live,

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the Church must find an end outside of itself. Unless it views itself as an instrument rather than an end, it dies at the top, its leaders become mere ecclesiastics, its evangelistic functions are atrophied. Without this larger goal, the Roman expression of Christianity is inevitable; the Church becomes one vast machine, consuming most of the energy it generates in maintaining itself. It succumbs to the perilous disease of all institutions, governmental and religious, the obliteration of the motive that gave them birth, the loss of the purpose that alone justifies their existence.

It is a self-evident truth that the Church must either capture the world for Christianity or be captured by the world. There is no neutral ground. The only chance of success lies in pushing the battle. This is the one shred of truth in the ancient contention that the Church must control the community. It must—but by animating its life with spiritual forces, not by an overlordship of temporal

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power. The Church cannot even hold its own in a community environment that is unchristian. If it deals only with individuals, while the forces of evil organize the community, they will destroy its youth and deplete its forces. If the whole powerful pressure of the environment upon the formative period of life is to be against Christianity, the Church will not be able to protect even the children of its own families. If it would build them into the kingdom of God, besides its direct provision for them, there must be massed on its side the indirect forces of the community life. "Stick to your job of preaching the gospel," said the leaders of the church to the preacher who was fighting organized vice in his neighborhood, and that very week a daughter of one of their own families was ruined in one of the houses he had been seeking to suppress! If the Church does not put its life to the hazard, as Jesus did, in carrying out his program for the whole of life, if it

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rejects his program, abandons the world to its fate and merely attempts to save a few souls from the wreck, it will in the end be swamped itself and go down with the wreck.

On the other hand, there is the possibility of a more tragic fate. The community may become more fully Christian than the church, at least in its desires. Then will the church, which has lost its birthright of community leadership, be left outcast in its poverty and weakness. Already in some sections of the community life this danger impends. The Church imparted the spirit and forecast the method of modern philanthropy. Shall it now leave it entirely to the professional social service group and attack them because their work is not spiritual? The Church has conserved a religious theory of government. Shall it now refrain from the dirty business of politics except to excoriate corrupt officials? The Church has always had some men who have fearlessly proclaimed the ideals and

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principles on which the modern labor movement is based. Shall it now refuse all aid and comfort to that movement and merely condemn it for its violence? The community life is feeling after God in these days, and the church which does not lead it will inevitably be ignored and abandoned. God is moving upon the modern world through many agencies, and the pietism that insists upon ignoring the organized community life, that is determined to keep the church apart from the other human activities in which God is working, is simply shutting itself off from God, now and forever. There is some glory in going down with the wreck in a vain and mistaken effort; there is nothing but ignominy in being left a waterlogged derelict because the course for the desired haven was deliberately abandoned.

It is of small moment to insist that the Church cannot live unless it finds a greater motive than its own life and a bigger program than gathering adherents. The more signifi-

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cant thing is that the Church cannot effectively do its work for individuals unless it also does its work for all the associated life of men. The very imperative to reach individual life with the gospel, which is universally acknowledged, involves also an imperative to reach the social order with the same power. Personal evangelism in certain sections of the population is blocked unless it extends to the community life. Unless it deals with conditions as well as with people, it does but run its head into a stone wall. We organize rescue missions to reach the "down-and-out" men of the casual labor group, the bums and hoboes, and, while we are saving a few hundred, the conditions under which they live and work are wrecking them by the thousand. Every winter and spring they pour into our cities from the harvest-fields and construction camps, the ice fields and the lumber camps. They have been doing rough work, living on coarse food, in uncomfortable quarters. They

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can have no homes of their own, and their social nature has been starved and brutalized. To meet their social need there are but the cheap lodging-house, the saloon, and the brothel. As long as we do not develop an evangelism that will minister to the social needs of these lives and then will reach back into the conditions of casual industry and transform them also, the work has only a fractional efficiency. In its approach to the most spectacular outcast groups the Church has already developed a social evangelism. In order that we may effectively save the drunkard, we add to the preaching of the gospel that can transform the individual the organized effort to save society from the curse of the liquor traffic. We are no longer content to attack the social evil merely with rescue homes, we begin to mass our forces against organized vice and against the underlying causes that produce it. As the Church follows Jesus in a ministry to the outcast, as it meets

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his judgment test of the reality and efficiency of its discipleship by service to the poor, the sick, and the prisoner, it discovers that the gospel of redemption is also the gospel of prevention.

In the tenement neighborhood the mission Sunday-school and the church settlement are organized. Their point of contact is child life. They reach and transform a group of children, but while they are saving their hundreds, the slum is destroying its thousands with its high death and delinquency rate, with its development of weakness, ignorance, and inefficiency. Unless then an evangelism is developed that will Christianize the slum and all that makes the slum, both in industry and government, the evangel to the child life of the tenement district is but partially effective. Indeed, it was the practical realization of this fact which led to the social service movement in the Churches. It was born of the evangelistic impulse in city missions. Its program



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was hammered out on the firing line by the men and women who are carrying the gospel to the darkest sections of our industrial cities, just as the Japanese perfected some high explosives in the field laboratories of the trenches before Port Arthur. Thus our city missionaries enlarged their message and their work until it covered the whole of the community life and its underlying forces.

Besides the imperative for a social evangel contained in the historic purpose of Christianity and sounded in the present emergency in the Church, there is also that which sounds in the call of urgent need from without. The world which it is the purpose of Jesus to save, which the Church must save or perish, is a world which calls to us with the cry of dire and utter need. One source of the evangelistic fervor of our fathers was their vivid realization of the needs of those to whom they spoke. They knew their world. They preached with flaming intensity because they

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knew they were preaching to sinning and dying men. With the same certainty must their sons face the social order. They must know their world and its needs, not the world of the arm-chair theologian or philosopher, but the world of reality; not the gentle, refined world of the library and the church, but the brutal, barbaric world of Wall Street and the tenderloin, of Ludlow and the Marne. Only when men see beneath the gay trappings of our culture the heart that is "desperately wicked" will they be consumed with the fire that cries "Wo is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!"

Under the dominance of the evolutionary view of the universe we have slipped into the tacit assumption that everything makes for progress, that all we have to do is to watch the unfolding of the purpose of God and the world will come to its goal. This is an all too shallow optimism. The scientific view of the universe allows us no such easy lot. It shows

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us a world which moves only as men push it forward with infinite toil. All the improvement of nature has been accomplished by the arduous labors of men. If there be any progress, it has been achieved as men have discovered and utilized the forces that make for it. Leave nature to itself and there is no evidence that it gets anywhere. It contains within itself the forces of decay as well as the forces of progress. The Power which can use one to overcome the other manifests itself only through human agency. So is it with the social order. Underneath all its achievements there lie close to the surface the forces of decadence and degeneration. They triumph, now in communities, now in nations, and again in civilizations. They are averted only by conscious and sustained effort. The world to which we preach is seen under the white light of science to be literally and in fact a dying world, apart from the energizing touch of those who in their service and sacri-

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fice bring to it the power of an endless life.

Into our shallow prattling about a Christian civilization there needs to come a stern vision of the fact that there are potent forces at work for its destruction, which *will* destroy it unless they are rooted out. On three counts the indictment of God is drawn against our Western civilization.

It is depleted by social waste. The forces that renew its strength at the bottom, the strong new groups of population, are being rotted away by poverty, disease, and vice faster than all organized philanthropies can check them! Unless these be reenforced by a great religious conviction of social justice that will remove the causes of this waste, the house of our civilization, weakened at the foundation, will fall about our ears.

Again, the blood of the Western peoples is being contaminated by race poisons, the chief of them sex disease and alcohol, transmitting their destructive power with the very germ of

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life. Alcohol we are defeating, but there remains the sterner death-grapple with sex disease, and, unless it can be driven from our midst, we pass the way of the older civilizations which became impotent from this cause. Again, our civilization is being torn asunder by strife. Its organization of militarism around the principle of economic aggression plunges it into a pit of carnage, and if international strife be abated, there yet looms up all the hate and hell of class and race hatred. Either we eliminate the principle of economic aggression or our social order goes headlong to its Armageddon. Here then, are the forces that make for death in the social order, and how near they are to its heart let current events demonstrate.

Without the transforming power of a social religion the race dies. Without God there is no hope for the world. This is after all the ultimate imperative for a social evangel—the absolute need for the gospel that has power to

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save both man and the social order from their sins and to put life into the dying world. The saving remnant is here, as Elijah found in Israel. Those who compose it do not decry social work nor with foolish sneers contrast eugenics and regeneration, but are striving to put God into the heart of our civilization, to organize it according to his purpose, to inspire it with his will. Has Christianity lost faith and ardor? Has it become conventional and respectable? Is it becoming old and static? Here is the challenge of an unregenerate social order to call it to vigor and power. Here are the great mass needs of humanity, requiring the massed efforts of the churches to cooperate with all other agencies of good-will for their relief and removal. *Here is a race dreaming of a new earth, facing the constructive efforts required to make it, yet waiting to be kindled with a great dynamic emotion that shall drive the collective will to the mighty task.*

### III

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THE necessity for a social evangelism is denied by many who acknowledge an imperative for social regeneration. They assent to the necessity for a complete transformation of the social order. They realize that society must be "born again," that it must have a new heart and will, in tune and allied with the heart and will of God, but they assert that this is being gradually accomplished by Christianity in and through the regeneration of individuals. They therefore insist that there is no need of any evangelism other than that which directs its attention toward persons. This view—that regenerate society is merely the sum total of regenerate individuals—may be called a theory of social salva-

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tion by addition. It shouts again the battle-cry, "Preach the simple gospel and the rest will take care of itself."

This proposal is naively inconsistent. Its advocates insist that individuals must come consciously into the Kingdom, by the exercise of faith and will. When, however, they face the social organism they abandon this vital truth. They insist that the social mind and will shall become Christian unconsciously and indirectly.

Such a position evades many practical difficulties, escapes many a fight. It is of course the old withdrawal from the evil of the world, the abandonment of its organized life to the outer darkness. If the goal of Christianity is entirely in the other world and its purpose is merely to take men triumphantly out of this world, then such a policy is correct. But if the purpose of Christianity is to create the civilization of God, then such a policy is a monstrous delusion. It sounds delightfully



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orthodox and very pious, but practically it does not work. How long will it take to save the world by merely adding individuals to individuals? Into what millennium will the Christian social order be postponed if we are to wait to accomplish it by units, each unit exerting on the whole simply its unconscious influence? While this process is completing itself, evil gathers its corporate power, puts its hand upon the forces of social control, nullifies and prevents the evangelizing of individuals, effectively interrupts the process upon which this view depends for the saving of the community. In a community organized for evil Christianity cannot even retain its own youth. Some of them inevitably sink into the saloon and the brothel. In a community that is not organized for good the more subtle forms of social wrong affect and degrade mature Christians. Sharing in the profits of social injustice, they keep silent and become blind in regard to it. The fact is that

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passive goodness fails of efficacy in an unchristian environment. It even becomes badness as Christians unconsciously participate in social wrongs and tacitly support them. Compare the efficiency of a community in which there are a few outstanding good men with that of a community organized for righteousness. The one may become Sodom and Gomorrah, fit only for destruction; the other will grow into the city of God.

This theory of corporate salvation by individual influence has been abandoned in certain fields even by its advocates. They no longer fight the outstanding evils of a community endangered by alcohol on any such basis. They realize that it is practically impossible to make a sober world by the process of persuading individuals to abstinence, because of the nullifying power of the organized liquor traffic. Therefore they attack the saloon, the brewery, and the distillery, and they attack them politically. They are not

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content, either, to rest in the theory that good men make good government. They realize that good government must be definitely and consciously organized.

There is a fatal fallacy in the statement that if men be individually good the results of their social action will necessarily be good. It is a conclusion not justified by the premise, which is itself incomplete. Part of the trouble is in the confusion of our judgment as to what kind of a man is good. It usually means the man that we like, one of our kind, of our set or class. We forget that Jesus came to unsheathe the sword, to divide the house, to set friend against friend, and that this principle of the social value of conduct is just his dividing agency. We insist that, because a man is a good church-member and a charming friend, he cannot be a great social sinner, oblivious of the fact that this is just the excuse offered for the political boss. He is to be justified because of his good fellowship. He

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stands by the gang. Yet his conduct is treachery to the group life, absolutely antisocial in its larger results. So the failure of outstanding Christians in their social conduct becomes antichristian.

A multimillionaire may create great foundations for social welfare, but the word that reveals an unwillingness to face the rights of others condemns Christianity before the millions. Dives may honor the atonement in his will, but his easy evasion of it in his own life, his willingness to let the toilers bear the social burdens while he carries no cross, makes his theology a by-word. "He is an angel at home," said the driver of a great industrial magnate who had often felt his kindness, "but he is a devil in business." A great giver to the church boasted that he could always hire his unskilled labor at fifteen cents below the market rate and the exploited group cursed both him and his church. These are tragedies of the dual conscience, and they abound in our

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churches. The same tragedy appears even in the ministry where the pressure of the competitive organization of modern life limits and sometimes destroys brotherhood. The dual conscience is found in lives that are only partly Christian; some of their functions are undeveloped and others are atrophied. They are good Christians in certain relationships, in the family and in philanthropy, but in civics and industry they are antichristian. Recognition of the estimable qualities of individuals must not blind us to their lack of other fundamentals.

The world never can be saved by men who recognize the authority of Christianity in only a segment of their lives. For such men Christianity does not enter the business realm, and the proposal to Christianize industry appears to them absurdly quixotic. Without faith, what works can they produce? In this sphere they serve not Christ but Mammon, and therefore their influence, instead of making for the

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saving of the industrial order from Mammon, is making for the extension of his power. Before industry can be made regenerate there must be a type of Christian who believes in that goal and consciously goes to work to accomplish it. This type is already beginning to appear.

The practical failure of this theory of social salvation by addition is due to its assumption of a world which does not exist. It belongs to the individualistic period before the creation of the modern world with its social intelligence and will. It is the product of an incomplete psychology. It never can accomplish the redemption of the social order by the addition of saved lives, for the simple reason that the world is not that kind of a world—for the reason pointed out in the discussion of the nature of social evangelism, that the social organism is much more than the sum of its constituent cells. What we have here is a problem of life, and not one of mathematics.

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Society is not the sum of individual units. When human beings merge together in a group the result is like that which follows the mixing of different elements by a chemist. As they fuse, a new entity appears to which he must give a new name. So do the fusing lives of men result in a new entity, the social organism, which thinks and acts far differently than would its individual units. They all share in this composite action and they are all parts of this new result, but religion must reckon with this thing which they jointly are, as well as with their individual existence.

Everywhere, as the social organism becomes more complex, its life becomes stronger and even as in the higher physical organisms its coordinating power over the individual cells becomes greater. With the development of education and the transmission and transfusion of thought, the social mind becomes stronger. With the increasing capacity for collective action, the social will becomes more

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powerful. The relation of this to the individual is presently to be considered, but the point is that the surplus of the organic life which is not in the individuals composing it becomes increasingly more. It becomes more and more self-conscious, more and more capable of action and self-direction. Therefore with the socializing of life the compulsion to reach this social organism with the evangel becomes greater. Its institutions, customs, habits, challenge the control and direction of religion.

But what about the individual? Does he drop out of sight? As the world becomes more does the individual wither? Is religion to mass its evangel upon the corporate life and neglect the person? That the tendency of social evangelism is to overlook the individual is the strongest objection brought against it. This charge, however, is based upon a total misunderstanding of the facts in the case. Those who make it impute to the advocates of



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social evangelism the same fallacy which vitiates their own reasoning. Because the social order cannot be transformed without the transformation of individuals, they assume that this latter process is all that needs to be undertaken. Then when others point out that individual transformation alone will not accomplish the redeemed social order, they assume that therefore the individual is to be left out of consideration. In both positions they are thinking in terms of an artificial world. They are making a contrast which exists nowhere except in their own minds. Their favorite antithesis is whether the Church is to save the social order or to save souls from hell, whether we need the arousing of a new social conscience or a revival of religion, whether the world is to be saved by perfect laws or by redemption, by a new industrial system or by individual regeneration. The answer of course is "*By both.*" These things are not in antithesis but are inseparable complements.

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There is no "*either or*"; it is "*both and*." There is no individual apart from the social organism, there is no social organism apart from the individual. The simple gospel on the lips of Jesus assumes this great fact and deals with both in all their relationships.

The one way of saving the social organism is through its constituent parts, which are individuals; the only way the individual can come to full salvation is by redemption of the social organism in which he subsists. To accomplish this joint end, men must be evangelized as *social beings*. They must be saved in all their group relationships, not as individuals abstracted from the world of reality, withdrawn from contact with their fellows and set apart in some arbitrary system of relationships with God. The fundamental error of those who insist that an evangel which talks about social conditions is neglecting the fundamental task of "getting the individual right with God" is that they are thinking of an indi-

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vidual who does not exist, except in the realm of theology.

Only when evangelism attempts to Christianize the social order does it get a full consciousness of the place and worth of the individual. Facing the actual man in modern life, it discovers that when the world becomes more the individual also become more. While today the power of leaders to secure the blind allegiance of the mass grows less the power of the average individual becomes more, because his points of contact with others are more numerous, the radius of his influence is greater, he is a more effective social agent. The man who is made Christian in all his out-reachings and then set to work as a transforming social power is a vastly more effective being than the man who becomes Christian merely in his intellectual or emotional life. Therefore the acceptance of its social mission does not diminish but rather intensifies the personal impetus of evangelism.

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The acceptance of the social task of evangelism not only makes more compelling its need to reach the individual; it also increases its results in the life of the individual. Personality is enlarged and not lessened as it is related in service and sacrifice to the furtherance of the organic social life. As this is the method by which social evangelism proposes to accomplish the redemption of the social order, its result is therefore an increase in the value and effectiveness of the individual.

It is the failure to perceive the interrelation of the individual and the social organism and more especially their effect upon each other that leads many social evangelists into later reaction. They find in their local community work that nothing can be accomplished except through individuals who have been made dynamic by personal religion, and they therefore swing back into the fallacious conclusion that all that has to be done is to make individuals religious. They fail to see that this is

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only true and effective when the individual they are dealing with becomes something more than an individual, when he is not a theological abstraction put into certain theological relationships, but when he is a living person who through his touch with God touches also the whole world of humanity in which God alone is fully known, and therefore becomes a transforming social power.

Many folk raise the futile question of which comes first in point of time, individual or social salvation. Here is the same misconception of the nature of the individual. Some people see only the fact that with mankind as we now have it no better social scheme can be worked. Others see only the fact that the individual cannot be fully redeemed until the redemption of the social order is accomplished. Therefore each group works for the bit of good that it sees and hurls recriminations at the other for not quitting its job and coming over to work with them. Both fail

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to see that each of their desired and necessary ends depends upon the other, and that they can only be realized as they are realized together. To slur either part of the joint process is indefinitely to postpone the accomplishment of the other. To look upon social redemption as something that waits entirely in the future until all individuals are redeemed or to postpone efforts for individual regeneration until a better social order is realized, is to put asunder what God has joined together in life and what Jesus always coordinates in teaching. Individual and social salvation cannot be separated in point of time—they proceed contemporaneously. The regenerate social order is accomplished, even as individual salvation is accomplished, by forces that are consciously perceived and also by forces that operate unperceived. Like the wind or the thief in the night, some of them come, and others are produced by the conscious labor of individuals.

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There is an interacting development here, a coordinate process. Every time a man becomes consciously Christian his life helps the development of the Christian social order. Every time the social order becomes in any part Christian it helps to bring its constituent individuals into Christian consciousness. Together they "press on unto perfection." The regenerate perfecting individual helps along the regenerate perfecting society, which in turn strengthens him and helps others. There are some men who see God first and then their fellow men; the flaming vision of the Eternal gives them the passion for brotherhood. There are some men who see their brother first and through him God; the passion for brotherhood gives them the consciousness of the Divine. Presently they hear "Inasmuch—" and stand face to face with the Master whom they have followed afar off. With the Christianizing of the whole of life this group increases. As life contains more

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of God they see God more clearly in its working facts. There are many men who will work for a regenerate social order before they are consciously regenerate themselves, just as many men will vote to prohibit the liquor traffic even though they drink themselves. Jesus says let them alone, for while they are working for him they are themselves getting closer to him.

The more of God we get into life the more real he becomes. The accomplishment of the regeneration of any part of the social order helps all individuals; by so much as they live in accord with Christian standards, by so much is their whole life lifted nearer to the complete Christian life. If we can get children born in a godlike community, their whole development will there be affected and shaped by the right standards of life. The stronger the social intelligence and the social will become, the stronger is their power to influence and mold the mind and purpose of individuals



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and the more necessary is it that their influence should be a Christianizing influence. Thus we have an interdependent, coordinate process, each of its parts affecting the other, requiring an evangel whose purpose it is to reach together the individual and the social order. If it is true that "society exists in the cooperation of individuals," it is also true that individuals exist only in their cooperation in society. Therefore it is this cooperative process as well as the individual that must be reached by the evangel.

Since this is to be accomplished only by reaching the individual in all his relationships, the appeal of the evangel to the individual must be a social appeal, an appeal for social action and results, in order that these individuals may work out social salvation. Continually to appeal to individuals to seek personal salvation is to arouse their selfish instincts and to defeat the very end of Christianity. A purely personal evangelism, which

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does nothing more than urge individuals to get their own souls saved, is obstructive to the kingdom of God. It will produce and has produced a type of individual who honestly believes that his soul's salvation is the supreme object of the universe and that God has indeed given dominion of the universe to certain favored persons. To attempt to save life in this fashion is indeed to lose it. *A sound personal salvation is accomplished only when the appeal is to lose life in order to find it, to join consciously with God in the saving of the world; not to attempt to appropriate the benefits of Calvary for personal ends, but to share in Calvary in order that the world may be redeemed.*

## IV

### NEW TIMES, NEW METHODS

WHEN evangelism develops a social purpose, what changes will be effected in its method? The method of course will be determined by the aim. The aim of the new evangelism is the reaching of the group life as well as the individual. It is attempting to touch the social conscience and will. It is endeavoring to change the standards of the community. It would move the individual to this end. The results sought are not acceptance of dogma or manifestation of emotion, *but a change in life*. It is new life that is needed and it must be remembered that life precedes consciousness, that when once life comes, consciousness will develop naturally. Instead of trying to obtain uniformity in

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religious thinking the new evangelism seeks a uniform quality of life.

The evangelism that seeks to develop life "more abundantly" throughout the whole population will at once find access to sections where another type of evangelism has had little entrance. These new fields will in themselves to some extent determine methods. There are certain population groups which are not now reached effectively by the conventional preaching of the gospel. They must be included in the scope of the evangel both for their own sake and because the community life cannot be moved unless they are reached. There is the poverty group, which is not largely present in our churches, for there is an economic standard for church-membership. There is the immigrant group which stands aloof from us because of inborn prejudice and suspicion. There is the labor group which, in so far as it is self-conscious, finds its activities lying outside of church cir-

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cles. These groups of course more or less coincide. They represent a large section of the population which plays a powerful part in the forming of the social conscience and will. Upon this section our ordinary evangelism has made little impression. Conventional evangelistic methods do not cross class or race lines to any significant extent.

Along with those population groups whose needs cry aloud for the gospel, there are certain standards and relationships in our social life which are yet unevangelized. These lie in the field of government and industry, in those associations which are generally assumed to be outside the sphere of religion. These unreached groups in the population and these unreached spheres in modern life belong together. The evangel that tries to reach all the people is driven to comprehend the whole of life, and the evangel that is willing to face the whole of life will reach all the people. The only effective evangelism for the disin-

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herited groups is one that faces all the needs of their life, and these needs cannot be met except by Christianizing the economic and the political spheres of life. The moment the evangel attempts the latter task it has the ear and the heart of the groups that now stand aloof from it. An evangelism which deals with the questions of bread and work, that are the dominant interests in their lives, has instant access to them. A church located near a Jewish quarter started a discussion of the industrial question after the Sunday evening service. Crowds of Jews attended, and after a few months a considerable group of men inquired on what conditions they could unite with the church.

The same thing is true concerning a smaller but more powerful group in the community, namely: the "intellectuals" who have become aware of the compelling need for the reconstruction of our economic life on ethical grounds and who have turned aside from a

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purely formal type of Christianity whether it be ecclesiastical or dogmatic. This group also is reached by an evangel that has the social emphasis, that puts them to working out the social salvation of the community. There is also the group of luxury, who by their manner of living deny the imperative of the gospel over their lives. They have heard the gospel of individual salvation through sacraments or dogmas or feelings and they are the living proof of its inadequacy. The only gospel that will penetrate the armor-plate of their self-righteousness is one which deals with their relations to men in the economic order and convinces them of social sin and of their need of God.

Here then is the field—to reach the whole community life and especially those groups which are now largely untouched by the gospel; to reach the whole social order—to Christianize the cooperative relationships which bind men together in the social struc-

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ture and especially those relationships which have not yet been brought into harmony with the ethics of Jesus.

In reaching this field the methods of present-day evangelism will be used, but certain of its processes which are now incidental will become central. To reach the community conscience and will as a whole, the mass community meeting as used by the professional evangelist is available. The results secured by these meetings are largely due to the fact that they are able to concentrate so much of the community life upon their objective. They bring to bear upon individuals the full force of the great crowd. They are massing for one purpose almost the entire life of the town or city. They are unconsciously using the forces revealed by a study of crowd psychology to secure individual results. Most conversions, even educational conversions of children, are accomplished by this focusing of group influence. Some social results are



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also consciously sought by current evangelistic campaigns in the same fashion, notably a repressive attack upon liquor and the social evil. Some evangelists now bring into a campaign an associate to face the community with its social needs and to enlist converts for community service. But for the most part the tremendous social forces massed in these great union meetings go to waste and leave an inadequate constructive community result behind them. What does occur is usually a by-product rather than a consciously desired result. A year after a certain town had concluded a successful cooperative evangelistic campaign which filled the churches with converts, it still contained a segregated vice district unusual in extent and organization for a town of that size. When an entire community has for a month considered religion together, and there are still overwork, underpay, and occupational disease in its industries, or housing that destroys health and morals, it is a

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striking revelation of the fact that evangelism has failed to deal with those vital relationships between men that make up the community life.

On the other hand, attempts are being made to mass the forces of the community for constructive purposes without either the religious sanction or a conscious effort to generate the religious dynamic. This occurs in welfare exhibits, community institutes, and various campaigns for local betterment. The two types of meeting need to be blended into one. No evangelistic campaign should be held which does not appeal to the social conscience, which does not face the concrete social sins of the community, which does not call the whole population to repentance and jointly to seek after the righteousness of the Kingdom. Every evangelistic effort should find its climax in calling men to dedicate their lives in concrete service to the community, to live the life of God among their fellows, to under-

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take certain immediate measures to this end. No campaign for community betterment is fully effective which does not call men into the immediate presence of God to consider their duty to all other men, which does not develop a realization of the necessity of changing the motives as well as the forms of community life. Conversion is a fact for the community as well as for the individual. There come moments when the entire community is touched from above, is given a new vision and a new motive, turns away from old sins forever and finds a new power for living. Such occasions have recently come to many communities in this country in their change of attitude concerning the liquor traffic or commercialized vice. The progress of the race to God is infinitely slow, but not infinitely regular. There come times when a nation can be born in a day, when a new world order may swing into vision over night. The more possible it is to mass our forces of intelligence

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and will, the more we are able at times to accelerate progress, to put ourselves in touch with the Divine for the accomplishment of immediate results. The men who proclaim an evangelism which is the power of God for the complete transformation of the individual will also include in their ministry a like purpose for their community, and may confidently labor for this end. In patient toilings they will develop the community life toward Christian standards in certain spheres of common action. At times they will see the community come to consciousness in these spheres, accept the Christian ideal and highly resolve together to sustain the measures that will realize it. They will know then that life has permanently moved up to a new level.

Another type of meeting now being developed is the Open Forum. This discusses current social and community questions from the standpoint of religion. Its appeal is to the entire community and it gathers in its audience

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all kinds of folk, in large proportion non-churchgoers. A high percentage of Jews and socialists are always present. The audience is given full opportunity to question the speaker. Religion may not take refuge in authority. It must prove its worth by the acid test of democracy. In many places such forum meetings have brought groups of men impossible to reach by ordinary evangelism into the personal religious life. In all cases they have at least developed a common meeting-ground, a common understanding between groups that are alien, and consequently have made possible the massing of the forces of the community for common religious action.

The outstanding characteristic of the forum type of meeting is that it emphasizes life, not dogma, bears down not so much upon what men ought to think as upon what they ought to do, aims not to pass resolutions but to get action. The same type of meeting needs to be used in the services of the church. A demo-

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cratic participation in worship ought to involve a democratic union for action. The church must develop more services which will call together all the forces of good-will to consider what ought to be done to make the community life better. Such meetings will develop genuine evangelistic power. "If this is Christianity, then I can be a Christian," said the keen, young, agnostic Jew after listening to an exposition of the teachings of Jesus in relation to industrial life. Men of trained intellect have come away from recent national gatherings which formulated programs of social welfare saying, "The atmosphere was that of the old-time revival meeting." The passion of the coming evangelism had touched them, they had felt the thrill of the new revival that is even now upon us. The fervor of most labor meetings is in striking contrast to the apathy of many church gatherings. Men say it is because the labor meeting is concerned with the vital bread and butter ques-

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tion. It is,—but the religious atmosphere is generated only because the group need is considered, and therefore love and sacrifice are developed. When the church will consider together all the common needs, as Jesus did,—hunger of body and hunger of soul,—then the spiritual temperature of its meetings will not fall; it will rise.

In carrying out a social evangelism new types of effort will be developed. To reach the groups that have been specified the gospel must be carried to them. The day has gone when the church could sit down and wait for the unchurched sections of the community to come. They can be called by skilful advertising, but this is only a temporary expedient. If its object is simply to enlarge the church, if it does not use its success in turning its crowds out to Christianize the community life, its last state will be worse than its first. The best advertising any church can have is the outreaching effect of its life upon the com-

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munity. Moreover there are groups which no advertising can reach, because of their ignorance and prejudice. The church that really wants to reach the unchurched groups must go where they are. The poverty group, the immigrant group, must be reached in their homes and natural meeting-places by the conversational method. The lay forces of the church must be organized to this end, even as the Roman Church developed its lay orders. The labor group can be reached in its own halls, which are usually open to any man with a vital message who has established a contact through friendship. A new type of evangelist must be developed who will go where men are and meet them on their own ground. An organized propaganda for the social aspects of the gospel needs to be placed upon the streets. The work of the preaching friars and of the Salvation Army must be renewed in modern terms. In Paris a Roman Catholic order takes young workingmen and



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trains them in classes in debate and discussion, sends them finally into retreat for a few weeks' definite education, and then sends them back into their workshops as conversational missionaries to their fellow workers. It is an attempt to reach not simply workingmen but the working class with a Catholic view of economic and social questions. An effective evangelism must develop special methods to reach the self-conscious working class.

The only way the gospel can be effectively carried to the self-conscious working class is by carrying it into life. When it is lived in the economic sphere it will indeed be for them the power of God into salvation. This process must start within the Church. If the Church knows not the power of such a full salvation, how can it ever be the leaven to save the world? The Church is now largely a middle-class group whose ethics, ideals, and forms of thought differ from those of the working class, and do not comprehend clearly the property-

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less mind of Jesus. If the group of toil is to be reached with the gospel it is certain that the Church will have to get the "mind that was in Jesus" regarding property. They who would carry to the workers the mind of Jesus must also carry it to the Church. There is some justification for the trend of recent evangelists, from Moody on, to turn their batteries upon the Church, for the evangel that would carry the power of the gospel to the world of modern life is needed as much within the Church as without it. It must be continuous, not spasmodic, educational as well as emotional.

The evangelism that is conscious of its social goal must also be an evangel of deed. Its aim, as previously stated, is to secure life, not conformity, to reach certain unchristian parts of the common life, and this can only be done by action. The gospel of life is most effectively proclaimed in actual, living relationships. He who brought men life touched

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them with the hand of service as well as the word of the Spirit. While he talked to them, he went about doing good. When he fed the hungry and healed the sick it was a most effective definition of the gospel of love. The gospel goes not one inch further than the evangel of life carries it. It is still a leaven. Christianity has carried the evangel of the Prince of Peace only as far as the results of Peace Conferences in the actual modifications of warfare. This is the evangelism that convinces men far more than the fine frenzy of a propaganda. Hugh Price Hughes said that in securing the passage of the Factory Acts Lord Shaftesbury had done more for the kingdom of God than if he had preached many gospel sermons, and it would be hard to find a more potent form of social evangelism than the manner in which the non-conformist conscience of England has influenced its political life. All the social work of our city churches, all the activities as well as the life of our

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settlements, carry the gospel in living form that men may see and touch as when the Word was made flesh.

There has been no more effective evangelism in the history of Christianity than that of early Methodism, and English historians have long been telling us that its greatest results are to be found in the group life of the English people. It organized a ministry of service to all the needs of the people to whom it preached. Its methods are embodied in the instructions given by John Wesley to one of the preachers whom he sent to this country. "I turn you loose, George, on the American continent. Publish your message everywhere in the open face of the sun and *do all the good you can.*"

One of the defects of modern church life has been the failure to recognize the evangelistic power of deed. Even a purely personal evangelism is ineffective unless it organizes an evangel of service as well as preaching.

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The Salvation Army found that out long ago, likewise every other agency that tries to evangelize the unchurched groups. "You can't convert a man while his feet are cold," said John Wesley, and the misery group, dumbly driven by hunger and fear, are impervious to the larger meanings of the gospel. The life of God will not touch them through empty phrases, but only as it comes through ministry to their need. The preaching of the gospel to the poor involves both constructive and preventive philanthropy. These are phases of the evangel, and unless this be recognized both evangelism and philanthropy fail. The only effective effort for the misery group is that which brings spiritual forces to bear in practical fashion for the mending of broken lives. The best way to rehabilitate submerged individuals or families is to put them into the fraternal fellowship of a church that is flaming with the passion to realize the love of God in service to men.

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Those groups which are not starving but are suffering from the inequalities of life, desirous of higher standards of living and touched with a sense of injustice, are not to be evangelized by exhortations to be content and to remember that life consists not in the abundance of things. They will not find the life of God in the platitudes with which men bolster up injustice, but they will see God when men make his righteousness to flow through the midst of the land as a great stream. A labor leader died cursing the Church for its inactivity, but his fellows found the Church committee at the legislature supporting the child labor bill and said, "This is religion." The doors that are shut and barred to an evangel of the word swing ajar at the knock of an evangel of deed. The hand of service is an open sesame. If the Church really wants to reach the unchurched, it must cease to stand aloof and to pass down its charities and its missions. In vital contact, with the fraternal spirit, it

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must minister to all their needs. The churches that develop a powerful ministry of community service are the churches that have the evangelistic approach to the entire community, and even by the unworthy test of church statistics are the churches that succeed. The living evangel cannot be denied and will not be refused. It is the gospel with power and its appeal is irresistible. When the Word becomes flesh, then men see God.

But the evangel of deed has a deeper power than even its capacity to carry the gospel into the lives now closed to it. The fundamental purpose of the social evangel is to put God into the life of the community so that its every function shall be energized by him. This can only be done by action. The community must work out its salvation. In a moment, in some great mass movement, it may come into a sudden consciousness of the life that comes from above for organized groups even as for individuals, but the power and efficiency of

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this life has to be developed in all the slow details of living. Here is where the community work to which the social service movement calls the Church has evangelistic value. It would organize the philanthropy, the health, the recreation, the industry of the community according to the will of God. In all these spheres it would develop those just and righteous standards and those brotherly relations which alone can express him. It is a task of infinite patience and difficulty, but step by step it is being accomplished. Increasingly does the community where the church organizes itself for this evangel of community service become aware that God is in its midst. Increasingly do individuals become aware of him and put their lives into harmony with him. So do the standards of his Kingdom replace the standards of the world, until some day it shall appear complete among us. So does the city of God grow in our midst.

The evangelism that will put the gospel into



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the vital forces of the social order must be an evangel that applies it to conditions as well as men, that deals with the environment as well as with persons. This is the ultimate demand which the social movement makes upon evangelism. It has carried it to groups of men now inaccessible, in an evangel of deed as well as of word. It now insists that the environment which surrounds men must be Christianized; that it must contribute to the spiritual life instead of detracting from it. It is quite obvious that we cannot Christianize men thoroughly unless we Christianize the conditions that so largely influence men. We must seek to remove the conditions that wreck men as well as endeavor to reclaim them.

Those who study the effects of heredity and environment upon the development of children, recognize the latter to be the dominant factor. "The environment counts for ninety per cent," said Jacob Riis, after long and intimate acquaintance with the children

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of the slums, and later added, "make it ninety-nine." Thousands of children of poor heredity rescued from the slums and transferred to a favorable environment have become good and valuable citizens. The boy in the court, the bum on the street, are the product of bad social conditions. To change those conditions will not accomplish the whole purpose of the gospel in their lives, but it will prevent them from becoming bums and criminals. To direct evangelism toward the product, without focusing it upon the cause, is a policy that is both futile and foolish. The preventive social work of our cities needs to be hitched up with our church program. City missions and preventive social work belong together. They need to unite in a common effort the far-reaching program of the one and the evangelistic consciousness and passion of the other.

To recognize the powerful pressure of environment upon persons and to insist that evangelism must deal with conditions is to

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increase, and not to lessen, the personal emphasis. As life becomes more complex the environment increases its pressure upon the individual in direct ratio, but man's control of the environment increases in the same proportion. Men are more and more dependent upon their environment, but it is now a social and not a natural environment, a man-made thing and not the inevitable decree of the universe. The primitive man in his ignorance and fear was a slave to his natural environment. He has conquered nature and made a social environment of his own, and if that has brought a new slavery it is his own fault. To recognize the pressure of environment in the forming of life is but to fling a challenge to man's spiritual nature, to arouse the community to master the environment until all its members shall become the free sons of God. It means the enlargement of personality, the permanent transcendence of the universe by the soul of man kindled by the soul of God,

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the turning of matter into spirit, the putting of all things under the feet of man, compelling the physical aspects of life to contribute to its spiritual development. This is the final triumph of the gospel—to make the new earth, which shall be the city of God come down out of heaven to be with men.

The final distinction of the method of social evangelism is that it develops no hierarchy, creates no priesthood. It is a lay movement. It puts all to work in the task of transforming life. Its goal cannot be reached except by the cooperation of all. It knows no special privilege in spiritual task or spiritual culture. It calls the men of action, the workers of the earth, to stand within the holy of holies and serve the most high God. It finds their place of ministry at the bench or desk. It puts the touch of the divine upon common folk at common tasks, makes them coworkers with God in the redemption of life, and so illumines the daily duty with the glory of the eternal.

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The evangel that is to be wrought into deed in the transforming of life must find its apostles and martyrs in all the vocations of the workaday world. The seers and the prophets may proclaim the vision and shout the trumpet call, but the new world is to be realized by the men of science and industry who will be its discoverers, explorers and pioneers. God must come again and again as a servant, must ever stand in the workshops of the world.

The social evangel recognizes no special privilege of service or suffering. It sounds the call to heroism to all the sons of men. The men of toil and trade are not to be denied the heritage of the prophets. *The Christ who went from the carpenter's bench to Calvary, by way of the money-changers' tables and the judgment hall, has yet to take both the men who stand in the place of toil and the men who sit in the seats of power with him to the cross-crowned hill. The world waits for its redemption against that day.*



## V

### THE NATURE AND CONTENT OF THE MESSAGE

**W**ITH what message is evangelism to reach the group life? What truths shall it emphasize in order to develop its social effectiveness? As with the tongue of fire it kindles the deed of service and the task of renewal, what shall be the content of its preaching?

The social aspects of the evangel must not be separated from its individual appeal. Since life is one—neither individual nor social but both,—since the gospel is one,—neither individual nor social but both,—the whole of that gospel must be continuously applied to the whole of life. Line upon line, precept upon precept, the social application

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of the gospel to our social life must be made along with its application to the personal life. Its demands for the regenerate life in the social order must be coincident with its demand for the regenerate life in the individual. We need a preaching which will cause the socially-minded outside the Church to see the necessity of individual religion, and will make the individualists within the Church to see the imperative for social religion. Times there will be when special sermons or series of sermons on the message of the gospel concerning concrete social issues will be opportune, but for the most part the most effective social preaching is indirect, the natural and continuous unfolding of the whole gospel. With mighty shoutings or the thunder of artillery the walls of some city of evil may now and again be brought crashing to the ground, but day by day the still small voice must reveal God and without sound of ax or hammer the walls of the holy city be upraised in the midst



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of life. For both these endeavors, to sustain both the continuous preaching and the special appeal, the preacher must have a vivid sense of the particular needs of the group life and a clear conception of the fundamental principles of the gospel which are to be worked out in collective action.

The message of the evangel for the collective life, as for the individual, must convince men of sin and righteousness and judgment. The call to repentance opens the gospel of the Kingdom and the first social task of evangelism is to show men their social sins that they may turn from them, to arouse and develop the social conscience. To men steeped in individualism, to a people hardened by generations of tolerance of the idolatry of commercialism, must be brought home the exceeding sinfulness of unsocial conduct. One of the significant signs of our times is the stirring of the consciousness of social sin. This nation is being profoundly moved by the exposure of

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social unrighteousness. We have come to see the social sins of individuals, to realize that men may be good husbands and fathers and church-members and yet bad citizens and employers. But this is not enough. Far deeper than the sense of sin aroused by these particular local wrongs is the feeling of the great injustice of modern society which presses hard upon the finer spirits of our times. The waste of life in our industrial civilization, the inequalities of life, the hardships and deprivations of large sections of the population, the stunting of their lives, the attrition of their spirits—these facts cry aloud that whether it be in the social organization, or in the spirit of our life, or in both, something is fundamentally wrong. We are all involved in it. Its taint is on the house that we live in, the food that we eat, the clothes that we wear. It is a fact, and not a theory, that we are all accomplices in the injustice of our civilization. There is no way out except by common action.

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The individual protest is but the voice in the wilderness. To be effective it must reach the community and move the community. And the community will not be moved, the common action will not be taken until together the people feel these social injustices, until there is a general conviction of social sin, until together we cry, "God be merciful to us—sinners."

Social repentance must be no vague sentiment that will permit the individual to escape responsibility. Men who are conscious of rectitude in their personal life must be made to feel their sinfulness because of the vast corporate wrongs of our time. As Rauschenbusch puts it: "As long as a man sees in our present society only a few inevitable abuses and recognizes no sin and evil deep-seated in the very constitution of the present order, he is still in a state of moral blindness and without conviction of sin." As long as such things as war and poverty exist in our midst, every individ-

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ual needs a profound sense of the fundamental unrighteousness of the system that produces or suffers them, and they will not be removed until this conviction of sin rests heavily upon the majority. One evidence of the failure of current evangelism to drive home a sense of our social sins is that so-called good people dismiss these corporate wrongs as beyond their help or responsibility. The question of our indirect participation must be pressed on the conscience. A sense of the social sins in which we all share will lead back to personal responsibility. Do we profit by them? Could we lessen them? The men who drive home the conviction of social sin are the men who will drive home the truth, "Thou art the man," not by isolating some prominent persons, but by making universal a sense of individual responsibility. Only so will men be driven to God and to the heroic action required by true repentance. Without bitterness the work must be done. Again the cry must be heard,

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“Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

It is a question whether the quickened conscience that perceives our social sins does not exist in greater force outside the Church than within its walls. Aside from a few leaders, the church group is still living in the individualistic moral code of an earlier age, a code of great force that will never be outworn and for whose strengthening society owes much to the Church, but a code which is inadequate for our complex modern life. A new social morality is touching the hearts of men. Will the Church recognize it or will it take refuge in forms and customs, remaining content with its past achievement? Those who condemn the vices of the publican and harlot and take easy comfort in the virtues of the Pharisee will find them a cheerless refuge in the face of the scientific revelation of the causes of modern vice. Too often the social sins and the social neglect of the church people are directly

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responsible for the vice they so virtuously condemn. Who profits from the conditions that foster vice and lower the moral resistance power of the bottom section of the population? When the whole relation of luxury to poverty, the amount of rent, interest, and profit that is drawn directly from vice and crime and indirectly from the environment which develops them is made clear, the word again is true that the sinners of the streets pass into the Kingdom before the scribes and the Pharisees. The church group enjoying the comfort and security produced at the cost of hardship and insecurity comes to judgment at the hands of man and God if its only prayer is one of thanksgiving that the vices of the streets have not touched its homes. Until it abandons the place of privilege and the attitude of self-righteousness and stands far off with needy folk joining with theirs its own cry for mercy, feeling its own responsibility of action and inaction for the great corporate wrongs that

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press so heavily upon the lives of the weak and the poor, the Church cannot call a sinning world to God. By just as much as social workers and thinkers need to reckon with the sin of the individual, by just so much does the Church need to reckon with the pressure of social sin upon that individual. The evangel that would convince the world of sin must begin in a Church that will take the world by the hand and will together pray, "Forgive us our trespasses."

The gospel of the Kingdom does not leave men enjoying the luxury of an emotional repentance, or the vision of a new-born faith, while wrongs go unrighted. The world life must be convinced of righteousness. It must bring forth the fruits of repentance. The idealism of the gospel is practical. It must be applied in local and general situations, in programs for the community, in legislation for the state, in policies for the race. Here the evangel must point the way; it must indicate

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what are the real fruits of the repentant spirit. It must pronounce approval or condemnation of measures according to its vision of the righteousness of Jehovah. All declarations of the social function of the Church that do not marshal its forces for social action around the conviction of social sin and the desire for social righteousness are futile. To arouse the hosts of the Church with the battle-cry of its social mission and to give them no program is but to march them into an impasse. To expound the social principles of the gospel and then to hold the Church back from social reform is to evade the real and difficult task of religion. It is not the business of the evangelist to marshal voters or to push the Church into the state, but it is his business to put religion into the organized life of the community. And in these days of the growing uselessness and needlessness of party machinery, it is imperative to gather the forces of good-will in every community behind those measures



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which in any degree realize the righteousness of God, so that step by step his Kingdom may come. Only so can it come, as it lives in men and is lived by men.

But imperative as it is to support constructive measures which will organize the community around the will of God, it is still more imperative to educate the community in those fundamental principles by which the people themselves may form the necessary measures that will represent the gospel in social action. The world must be convinced of standards of righteousness, not simply of measures. A social morality is being developed around the teachings of Jesus. It is creating a new code of personal ethics and inspiring the constructive social measures of the time. These are forming around the desire for social justice. The preaching of a God of righteousness has produced in society certain standards of justice between individuals. It must now develop certain standards of justice between

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groups, to express the righteousness of the Kingdom. The beginnings of social justice are worked out crudely in the Hebrew national life, and the modern pulpit must finish that task. But before it can rally the people around the measures that embody and make concrete the ideal of social justice, it must inspire the people with a passion for that ideal. It must convince the world of the righteousness of a God who requires men to act justly in their group relationships.

Social justice meant for the Hebrews the brave attempt so to organize life that no children should be born into poverty, in order that no inferior group might develop and become subject to the group of strength. This same goal must be raised before the eyes of the modern world, in order that it may adopt the measures which will realize it. There is a disinherited group developing even in this land of opportunity and democracy. Poverty, disease, and vice, which afflict the whole race,

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take a bigger toll from the underpaid, overworked group at the bottom of the industrial world than from any other section of the population. Deprived of the means of development, the children of this group are less able than others to fight against these foes. Succeeding generations become less efficient, more ignorant, and more delinquent until a degenerate group results. With the proclamation of the needs and rights of this group must the preacher of the brotherhood of Jesus shatter the complacent prosperity of the middle class and make concrete the ideal of social justice. "Shall the pulpit take sides?" is not a mere question of passing judgment between two organized groups in an industrial conflict. It is a question of where stands the preacher concerning the inarticulate struggle of the great poverty-stricken mass, the ten million folks in our land who have not adequate food, clothes, and shelter, who have no equal chance with the group of even moder-

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ate income to secure health, education, and moral development for their children. Dare the preacher of the evangel hesitate? The prophets proclaim God as the God of the poor. A part of the opening proclamation of the gospel of the Kingdom is, "To the poor the gospel is preached." The gospel of Jesus is a great "whosoever will," not merely for everlasting life in the world to come but for a more abundant life, even a hundredfold more, in this present world.

The brotherhood that Jesus taught as the human expression of the love of God demands the removal of those artificial inequalities in our civilization that have been crystallized out of the natural differences of men by the laws of property that concentrate education and power in the hands of a few, and leave weakness, ignorance, and inefficiency as the lot of the many. Before the measures to accomplish this ideal can be realized the people must be given the vision of a God who demands not

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mere temple worship but that justice shall roll down as waters in the midst of the land, whose Kingdom is to be found only as men seek its "righteousness." The pulpit will not need to spend its time pleading for the support of measures of social justice if it can inspire the principle of social justice as the great dominant rule of life. For, when the people desire the Kingdom and its righteousness above all else, they will instinctively seek for and rally around the measures that embody it. To rouse the passion for social justice until it shall be the great emotion that shall move and control the collective will is the imperative duty of the modern evangelist.

To convince the world of judgment is also the message of the modern evangel. The preaching of the law was the work of many a great evangelist. They reached the consciences of men by proclaiming the offended majesty of God, the terrors of his broken law. Now the Kingdom has its law as well as its

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gospel, and it is the business of social evangelism to proclaim them both. The laws of the moral life are not mere fiats on parchment or stone; they are written on the heart of men, engraved deep in human experience. So the law of the Kingdom is inwrought with the very constitution of human society. It is exact with the precision of scientific facts. The Kingdom is organized around the law of love, and the scientist confirms it, declaring that the social organism develops only as fast as the altruistic instincts dominate the egoistic, —that self-preservation demands self-sacrifice. The consequences of the violation of this law must be proclaimed. This business of social evangelism is not a mealy-mouthed cant about love. There are stern facts here, terrible as fate, resistless as doom. The continuance of modern social sins means absolutely and inevitably the destruction of modern civilization. When the heart of society has been eaten out with greed and selfishness, and its body

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destroyed with sensualism and lust, legal and illegal, then it will know that "the soul that sinneth it shall die," social as well as individual.

The pulpit must call all of science to its aid in driving home the truth that we have no guaranty for the permanence of our Western civilization; indeed, that its future depends entirely upon the elimination of certain evils. Unless we can establish what no other civilization has yet established, right relationships of sex and just relationships in property, we shall add but another to the decadent races. Unless the principle of sex purity be established in the individual life and in the social code, the work of our hands comes to naught. Unless the principle of economic righteousness can be established so that none will take more than they create and each will get all that he produces, men's hands will be continually raised against each other, and there will be unending warfare. Unless we can put God

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into these formative relationships in life, religion is not established. When this is done, it becomes the partnership of men with God, not for the gain and benefit of a select few, but for the good of all. Nothing less than this is the realization of life, and unless religion dominates the fundamental social relationships, it fails and life fails with it,—there is nothing left but outer darkness.

The preacher who proclaims this standard will take his chance of being called a pessimist, but he will be of more value to his times than those who in the presence of the gross violations of the laws of the Kingdom by modern society raise no voice of protest or of warning. The voice that is "sent" must cry against the social vices that flaunt themselves openly before our temples and against the denial of the spirit of the gospel by so many of the practises and standards of modern society; it must demand that social and economic conditions shall be changed to conform



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to the Golden Rule and the second great commandment of neighbor love; insist that the so-called natural laws which are supposed in the text-books to govern the production and distribution of wealth shall be consciously controlled by the will of man working in cooperation with the will of God until they become the divine law of love and effective for human brotherhood. This is a function of social evangelism and it belongs in the business of the Church. We cannot live in the wrongs of society and think to get ourselves and a few of our neighbors to heaven by keeping the ten commandments, by mere "statutory honesty." We shall none of us get to any heaven that is worth while unless we bring it nearer to this earth and bring this human society a little nearer to it, by proclaiming and living by the great, positive, constructive law of the Kingdom.

The task of social evangelism is not ended when it has sounded the call to social repen-

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tance and proclaimed the laws of the Kingdom and the consequences of their violation. Some men are driven from sin by the thunders of Sinai, but more are called by the gentle voice of the Son of Man, talking of the Father's house and love. Some men come to repentance by way of the terrors of the law, but more by way of the beauty of holiness. It is the call of the ideal that woos men to the life that is born from above. It is the business of social evangelism to proclaim the social ideal in all its charm and power so that men may not only see it but may rise up and follow it. When the voice of John the Baptist was stilled, no one sternly called the people to repentance, for Jesus was busy preaching the new life. Yet Christ called men from their sins with an authority that John did not possess, and even the publicans and the harlots followed him.

This new life that Jesus preached was not for individuals alone, it was the life of the

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Kingdom. In its human aspects, it was the historical development of the social ideal of Israel, which stands as the best piece of social construction attempted in ancient history. In the gospel of the Kingdom, which imparts a world horizon and an eternal content to the social ideal of Israel, Jesus gives the world a social ideal which is not a theory nor a dream. It has a historical basis, and embodies not only the hopes of humanity but capitalizes the experience of the race. It will achieve its goal because it has behind it not only the social achievement of the past, but also the unconquerable impulse for perfection which is one of the strongest forces in the evolution of society, one aspect of the hunger of the race for God. The day when the social conscience stirs is the day of the ideal. The men who are crying the need of social reconstruction are all idealists. Whatever their social creed, they all stand for what ought to be against what is. And the ultimate statement of what ought to

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be is in the social ideal of the Kingdom which it is the supreme business of social evangelism to proclaim as an ideal to be realized in human society.

In proclaiming the practicability of the kingdom of God, the social evangel makes its challenge to faith. The evangelists of an earlier day were no preachers of a negative repentance. They raised the cry, "Repent and believe." They voiced a positive demand and required the action of the will in the development of the new life. Even as the social note in evangelism deepens and widens the nature of repentance, so does it enlarge the content of faith. Men now know that the age of science is not the age of the decline of faith, that the "assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen" now bulks larger in the lives of men than in the days of their ignorance of the nature of the universe. As science now directs man to the largest task of his career, as it summons him to use the

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powers which it puts into his hands for the conscious control of human progress, it raises the demand for a still larger faith. Without it this great task cannot be accomplished.

The religion that was satisfied with the saving of souls, that considered its task finished when it was but begun, inevitably developed a paralysis of faith. Without exercise faith became atrophied. The fatal unbelief is that which sits in church and doubts the power of God, which limits his purpose and so will not cooperate in the redemption of the world. Whether it does not believe in foreign missions or in social salvation, it is alike the greatest menace to the Church. "Indifference in the Church" was the answer of several hundred ministers to a question concerning the greatest obstacle to their success. The root of that indifference is a lack of faith in the program of God. The men who do not believe that industry and government can be organized according to the Golden Rule will not work

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for that end. The men who subdued kingdoms did it through faith. Such men do the things that other men say cannot be done. When God can get enough such men, they will make a world which men now say cannot exist.

The church filled with comfortable, satisfied folk that believe in conducting business and government as their fathers did, will never save its community. The kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of Jesus only when men believe in that possibility enough to die for it. Not until men will die for the ideal of brotherhood as they now die for the national ideal will war cease. The pulpit of to-day must flash before the dull eyes of men, to kindle their weak faith, the vision of life redeemed to the uttermost, must make men see the deathless picture of the city of God coming down out of heaven to be with men. Then will come the faith that "laughs at impossibilities and cries 'It shall be done.'"

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There are three steps in the development of the faith that will transform the kingdoms of this world by the spirit of Jesus. The evangelism of the Evangelical Revival developed a faith that, in the face of the great immorality of English society and the deadly formalism of English religion, dared believe in the complete transformation of the individual life. The evangelism of the Missionary Movement, in the face of the narrow provincial pride, the entrenched prejudices, and the armed jealousies and ambitions of modern nationalism, dared believe in the redemption of all mankind, asserted the spiritual equality and the resultant temporal rights of the so-called inferior races. The evangelism of the Social Awakening, in the face of all the brutalities and sordidness of our Christian civilization, develops a faith that here in this world of time and place, in the very muck and mire of life, with no other material than these weak human lives, the city of God can be built.

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It is then with an ideal, and not a system of life, that the modern evangel challenges the faith and the will of the race. The task of the preacher of the gospel of Jesus is not only to proclaim this great ideal of life but to get it realized. He is not alone to announce the coming of the new life but to secure its development. Therefore he must point out the fundamental principles on which rest the social ideal of Jesus. He must insist that the economic and political organization of life must be based upon these principles, that they must control the whole of life, the nursery, the school, the workshop, the legislative hall, as well as the sanctuary. These principles touch the two root relationships from which the social order develops, from which spring all the other contacts of men that comprise it. One of these is the relationship of man to man in all the fellowships of life, the other is their joint relationship to things, to the external universe, to the physical resources upon which



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life depends for its maintenance and development. Around these two relationships are organized the family, the state, and industry, and Jesus declared the ultimate principle by which each of them must be governed.

Concerning the relationship of men with each other, he taught that they must be brothers bound by the bond of mutual service. Even as the Son of man was the suffering servant, so those who would follow him were to take his cross and to be the servants of each other. He found a world which had organized itself around the principle of selfishness, which declared that the right of the strong to rule and to use the weak for their advantage was the central principle of the state. He challenged this and proclaimed another kind of world. He told his disciples not to be as the Gentiles, with their lords and rulers, but to organize a brotherhood of service, and around this principle is to be developed his world-wide kingdom of brotherhood, justice,

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and peace in place of the kingdom of selfishness, oppression, and strife.

The principle of the right of the strong to rule for their advantage has continually divided men. It has ever given the world two conflicting groups at the extremes of society—tyrants and slaves, aristocracy and serfs, plutocracy and exploited wage-earners. It has developed the great military empires of the past and inspires our capitalistic industrialism. Most of the world can see that militarism is outworn, that the right of the strong to inherit the earth and to take their will of their weaker neighbors is no right at all, but the very essence of wrong, yet the world does not yet clearly see that industrialism is the embodiment of the same principle, and that the destruction of militarism, the loosening of its grip from government will not bring world brotherhood and peace. As long as the work life of the race is left organized around the principle of aggression—the right of the

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strong individual, the strong nation, the strong race to take and to keep what it is strong enough to get and to hold—the world will still be involved in hatred and strife.

In place of the right of the strong to rule, Jesus insists upon the duty of the strong to serve. In place of using their strength to secure special privilege, he demands that they use it to secure equality of opportunity for the weak, to get a place in the sun for all. This is the challenge of the Carpenter to the battle spirit of man. He would harness it to the arduous tasks of brotherhood. His empire is the reign of love, the triumph of the spirit of cooperation, the enthronement of the will to serve. When men insist that this is the dream of an impossible millennium, they must be reminded that the foundations of the city of God are already laid in our midst, that aristocracy is gone in government and priestcraft banished in religion, because free grace and democracy together have been preached.

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When the nations have been indoctrinated with the teachings of Jesus as they have been with the rights of the strong, then the brotherhood of service will come. It is the only organization of life that can endure. Only as men are moved by the spirit of brotherhood will they seek together in mutual service to establish justice, and without justice there can be no peace on earth.

The struggle for privilege and power, for the right of the strong to rule, rends life asunder. The effort of service binds it together. The organized life of any species develops only as natural individual selfishness is overcome by the need for cooperative action. One of the sins of those beings who have eaten of the tree of knowledge of good and evil is that, having subordinated the principle of selfishness in the development of the social life, it comes again to dominance in the struggle of separate groups to control life for their own selfish ends. That great student of

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insect life M. Fabre says, "I know of no instance, not one, excepting man, of parasites who consume the provisions hoarded by a worker of the same species." Man is the only animal that uses his strength to live off his own kind. This is the law of death, and Jesus would replace it with the law of life. The development of his principle of brotherhood means the abolition of all ruling classes. Before it must go not only pride of caste, the selfishness of special privilege and vested interest, but also pride and superiority of nation and of race. This principle of brotherhood which must be proclaimed by evangelism not as a sentiment but as the controlling principle of social organization, will lead us into race solidarity. When it dominates the hearts of men, it will establish the whole world in justice and righteousness and therefore in peace.

There is also a fundamental teaching of Jesus concerning the relation of man to things. It has been strangely deleted into trivialities

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of tithing, but how central it is in his religion may be seen when he puts the prayer for bread in the same breath with the prayer for healing from sin. Mammon is Antichrist with him; the arch enemy of God—"ye cannot serve them both." To seek things is to destroy the soul. So hard it is for the rich to enter the fellowship of the Kingdom, because the desire for goods, or the possession of them, tends to enthrall the spirit and to separate it from those fellowships with man and God in which the Kingdom consists. Almost does the Carpenter pronounce against property in his stern warnings against the danger of its grip upon the soul. To him all the wealth of the world is as nothing compared with the soul of one child. The heart of his teaching concerning it is that things are a means to life and not its end. The supremacy of man over goods, of the soul over the world, was his teaching, and no age ever needed more to hear this message than ours, in the midst of its prosperity. To

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the times when property has more protection by the state than humanity, when men are enslaved by the very power of the wealth they have created, when men are held in bondage by the very machines they have made and which ought to set them free from economic fear and want, when human life is sacrificed upon the altars of commerce and industry, with a wanton cruelty unsurpassed by heathen rites of blood, there must be brought the message that men are of more importance to society than wealth, that the soul is more than the world.

It is because men have made property an end instead of a means that they fight for its possession. The worship of Mammon, like that of all false gods, is the dance of death. To rescue life from the destruction which threatens it from the building of the house of our civilization upon the shifting sands of material values is an imperative task for modern evangelism. The last conflict of the

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soul is to secure its freedom from the external universe, to shake off the dominion of things. This must be fought out in every life, and in our civilization. And the Carpenter who won the fight himself holds the secret and the power of victory.

He teaches men that the goods of life were not meant to make a prison-house for the wasting away of the souls of men, but were meant to fashion the house of the spirit in which man and God might dwell together. He taught that they were to be used as a means to the spiritual development of life, and when men approach them from this point of view, bound together by his other great principle of brotherhood and service, then shall they find the measures which will so establish the common control and common use of them that the Kingdom of good shall come.

The evangel that is to herald this Kingdom must teach a spiritual view of property, its nature, its control, its use. It must make



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men see that property is stored-up energy, that into it have gone the lives of men, their labors and their ideals; that before men developed it, God's life was put into the natural resources out of which the labor of man makes it; that therefore this concentrated energy, divine and human, may not be controlled and appropriated for selfish individual or group ends; that if it be slavery to attempt to control the lives of men for personal ends, it is blasphemy and sacrilege to attempt so to control the life of God.

To such a vision of the flaming presence of the divine in the physical resources of life must the pulpit call men, that feeling their sanctity they may sacredly use them together in the development of the common life. It must call men to free their own souls from Mammon and then to help set others free. It must demand that men organize the work process of life around these two great principles of Jesus, that in brotherhood and service

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together they make the things of life the means to its highest development, that so they may realize in their midst the life of God which the prophets declared to be justice, righteousness, and mercy and which Jesus declared to be love.

With such a message evangelism reveals to the world a bigger and a closer God working with men at the great task of making a godlike humanity. It aims at a greater goal than the evangelism that simply brings men in touch with God and leaves them in an artificial relationship with him apart from the world. It abandons no part of life, but claims it all as the territory of the soul. Thus also it gets a stronger grip on men, calling them to a task that demands their deathless powers. It finds expression, not only through voice and pen, but also in the vital ministry of deed, in the actual contact of human relations.

*In the face of the social sins of the times to thunder the call to social repentance; to make*

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*vivid the outer darkness that waits upon the civilization that fails to realize the "righteousness of the Kingdom"; to challenge the faith of men to the building of the city of God upon this earth; to show men how in all high service together they may use the things of earth for that house of the spirit—this is to herald the social evangel; this is to proclaim the gospel of Jesus for the redemption of the world.*



## VI

### WHAT ABOUT THE RESULTS?

WHAT results may be expected from an evangelism which proclaims the word of life for the social order? Where shall the effect of such preaching be seen? Social evangelism insists that this question is secondary. It demands that the Church shall concern itself first with the truth of its message, shall make its program, not with an eye upon possible results, but seeing only the necessity of getting its message to the people and into life. To bear the Word is the supreme commission. To sow the seed is the primary task; to see the harvest is not essential.

One reason for the decadence of evangelism has been its over-emphasis upon results. Religion has become commercialized until it

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is content with small profits if only it can get quick returns, until it reckons the cost per head of its converts, until it compares campaigns as to the number obtained the most quickly and the least expensively. By such a test the ministry of Jesus in his lifetime would be counted a monumental failure. His successes will not be ours until we are as careless of results as he was. His method was to fling out the word and the deed into life and let the leaven work. He put pressure on no man, invaded no man's sanctuary. He was content always to sow the good seed, knowing that in God's own time the sheaves would come. Those who would do the work of the Kingdom must be as finely careless of results as was Jesus, must be willing to find them in his way. No followers? The cross to carry? Life lost? Yet the Kingdom draws nearer, the day of men that are brothers and a world that is God's becomes possible and he that loses his life saves it and saves the world with it.

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In this matter of results it is enough for the Church to-day to be as her Master. Among the immigrant and labor groups, the evangelism that is looking first for adherents that it can count is at once put under suspicion. It fails to reveal the Christ because it wants something for itself. In this respect the settlement has the advantage. The Church seeks members. The settlement serves God for naught, it will save life by the infusion of life, and if need be by the loss of life. Too often the reason that the Church cannot save its own life is that it will not lose it. Sometimes with sad fatuity it puts the barrier of itself between it and the very people it would reach, and sometimes, alas, between men and the Kingdom. It is time to manifest supreme faith in the truth that God's Word cannot return unto him void. The chief concern of the Church must be to discover what is the word of God for to-day; for that word will still be spirit and life, and being dynamic it will clothe itself

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with form and institutions. To put that word at work to-day, even though the result appears not until the long to-morrow, is the first duty of the preacher.

The evangelism that carries the whole word of the Master and follows his method will not stop to consider results to the Church. Its results cannot be measured in terms of church gains. The value of the social ministries of the Church can never be determined by what they do or fail to do in bringing more people into the Church. This is no fair standard to apply to them. Their purpose is social, and while they will open points of contact for individual, personal ministry, their main results will be social,—to be seen and felt but not to be counted. A city missionary society put a man at work among the Jews and then wanted to dismiss him at the end of the year because he had not built up a self-supporting church. What results would be secured in China by such a policy? It would dismiss even Jesus



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as an incompetent blunderer, an unprofitable servant. The Church must demand and secure efficiency in its efforts, but efficiency is revealed inadequately and sometimes not at all by the figures that show gains in converts and income. The love of statistics possesses the modern churches as an evil spirit and unless it be exorcised it will presently carry them far from the path of Jesus and run them headlong into the oblivion in which the world of tomorrow will bury those religious organizations that can find no bigger goal than the development of their own ecclesiastical life.

The Church will find neither the true message nor the true method in evangelism until it fashions both with a complete independence of results to itself. The avidity of a certain type of rescue mission to count its converts produces what the underworld knows as "mission stiffs" who are quite willing to furnish the supply for this demand in order to get the perquisites in food and shelter that go with it.

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The institutional work that is developed merely as a free lunch counter to swell the numbers of the Church, pauperizes both the social and the religious life of the people. If the Church approaches the conflict of labor and capital with an eye upon the crowd on one side or the money on the other, it presently earns and deserves the contempt of both sides. Not only will the Church fail in saving others, it will in the end even lose its own soul unless it is delivered from an undue desire to see and count the results of its labors.

The preaching of the social gospel to the immigrant and labor groups has actually in many places put the power of the whole gospel into the lives of many individuals and brought them into connection with the Church, but to attempt it for the latter end alone is to fail miserably of the larger result. Men tell us the labor crowd will fill the churches if social and industrial justice is preached, but it never will be preached if the attempt be made with

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the sole motive of securing such results. The justice of God will be preached only when the preacher cares not whether any respond.

One of the perils of the pulpit is the love of the crowd, the tendency to count success in the size of the congregation. It causes the expenditure of vast amounts of energy in the effort to get people to come to church with no proportionate labor on the uses to be made of their coming. The great evangelists all went to men; they did not try to get men to come to them. They did not exhaust themselves on the mechanics of a service but in the dynamics of the result. Seeking his results in the moving of men to live by the principles of Christ and the power of Christ in all the functions of life, the modern evangelist will go wherever men are gathered in these functions—in the labor hall and the political meeting, not to get men in touch with the Church, but to speak the word of life; in the banquet hall and the club, not as the court chaplain, still less as the

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court jester, but as the prophet of the living God. When the word of Jehovah is a fire in the bones of men, it will get out, it will not wait for the crowd to gather, it will care little whether the crowd is there or not. The voice that cries in the wilderness, sounding far out across the desert wastes, reaches back to the crowd behind it that has come from the city, reaches back beyond them into the city itself and touches and molds all the throbbing life of men.

Evangelism must move the mass to-day, for Christianity is to be put into the group life, but the gathering of the crowd can never be counted as any result at all; it is simply an opportunity. The evangelism that has the independence of Jesus for the crowd will develop the results that followed his preaching. The crowd followed Jesus, and he sought God in the lonely places. The crowd deserted him, and he set his face toward Jerusalem and death. The disciples fled, and he walked

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lonely to the judgment seat, in his last agony finding only a thief for comradeship. Thus he lifted the world up to himself and to the Father.

Those who preach the social message of Jesus, together with those who are working it out in action, may, however, properly attempt and expect certain practical results in the amelioration of the community life. The preaching that produces a conviction of social sin will succeed in eliminating some of the unchristian features in the community life. Organized vice, bad housing, grossly unjust conditions of industry, ought to be immediately removed. The preacher who does not attack these evils, who does not insist upon the removal of the stumbling-blocks from the paths of weak children, upon making secure the bread and the rest of the worker, will be no workman approved of the God who careth for the poor. The proclamation of the social evangel and the personal influence of the

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preacher does develop some constructive results in welfare work in the community and in industry; and sometimes directly produces such improvements as better wages and profit-sharing, and helps in securing wide-spread permanent results of this sort through legislation. Also such preaching diminishes the antagonism between classes, and at times suggests and promotes measures of cooperation that lessen and help to stop the war and waste of industry. While such results may be sought and found, yet even of these the evangel must be completely independent. It must shape its effort for the larger goal which the social imperative of the gospel demands. It promotes and accepts reforms only as steps to this goal, while its aim is the complete transformation of the social order until it shall embody the very life of God.

If the pulpit becomes engrossed in immediate results, in the securing of practical measures, its vision of the ultimate goal will lose

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sharpness, will tend to fade into the mists of the impossible future. It may even permit men to be satisfied with mere half measures, with reforms that are simply profitable to the group of property without calling their souls to the last hazard in the sacrifice that will establish justice whether it pays or not. If the pulpit cares too much for the credit and the joy of the peacemaker in the industrial situation, it may find itself in the easy path of compromise, crying peace when there is no peace, adjusting differences without the fundamental readjustment of the causes of difference. And if none of these things happens, yet to look ever for immediate results may lead into discouragement and despair when these visible, tangible results are not in evidence. Here, too, the preacher of the gospel of Jesus must be as his Lord, must possess with him something of the patience of the Infinite. As one of our prophets has reminded us, he who works for social progress must learn to think

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with the geologist and with God—in eons, not centuries.

Because a socialized evangelism is set to realize the most daring dream ever dreamed of men, its larger, truer results are indefinite and intangible and lie in the far-off future. It puts the leaven of new life into the social organism to work its fundamental transformation. It is a process of growth, a sloughing off of old imperfect members, a development of new organs, and the processes of interacting death and renewal which constitute organic growth are not easily perceived.

The value of such work is hard to be understood by ecclesiastical organizations whose tendency is to demand immediate results in the increase of adherents, and to want to harvest the crop immediately after the sowing. These have small patience with the slow and silent evangel of the leaven of life, whose effectiveness can never be estimated by the standards of men possessed by the demon of statistics.



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The results of a social evangelism are not easy to catalog. The development of spiritual forces, the Christianizing of the motor powers of the community are not things to be measured by statistics. With what instrument is spiritual power to be gaged and with what figures will you express the growth of the life of the spirit?

Sometimes the social leaven may be seen at work and its results perceived. The evidences that the community life yields to the evangel are now and again apparent, and changes in its structure may occasionally be noticed. There are laws upon the statute books of Illinois that represent different standards of value and a changed temper of life, much more fundamental and far-reaching than these expressions of it, all because two women some twenty years ago put the leaven of their lives, in the Christ spirit, into a neglected community on the West side of Chicago.

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Yet the results of the social evangel in word and deed pass ever beyond the power of perception. The voice and the life that puts the gospel of the Kingdom into a community extends the ripples of its influence beyond vision, multiplies its power beyond the calculations of the mathematician, awakens forces that other generations will name and organize. When a preacher gets individual men in touch with God, he starts results in human life which cannot be cataloged in tables of church statistics, and when that same preacher gets a function of the community life in touch with God he is doing something which may not be written into reports. He is not simply a community builder using its materials for highest ends, he is an imparter of new life, developing and guiding the forces which not only mold the form but change the very nature of the social organism. He lays hold of the creative will and puts it at work in the community life, and what it there does

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is presently felt in the whole social organism.

*The preacher and doer of the social evangel—it may be in some small village or neglected section of a great city—is in reality a world builder. A creative and redemptive fellow worker with God, he stands where time began, touching the primeval force, and reaches out to where time ends in the ultimate accomplishment of life. Whatsoever he accomplishes makes for that eternal Kingdom which is to be the outcome of all our shadowed endeavors and twilight strivings, the justification of all our hopes and dreams. All that he does is not now to be known. Its full value can appear only when the work of men's hands is seen without the veil of time and sense.*















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